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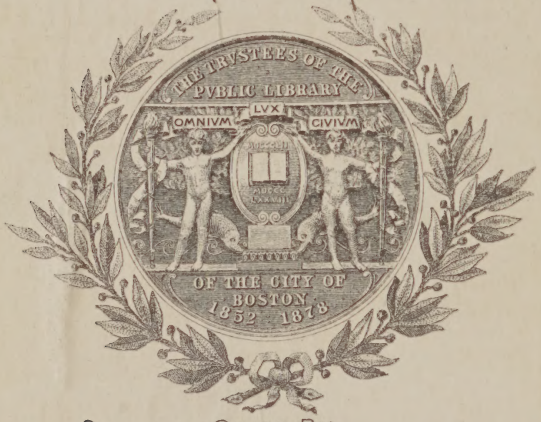

GIVEN BY

J. D. Townsend, Esq.

A

FAREWELL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

THE THIRTEENTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

ON

Occasion of Resigning his Charge,

SUNDAY, JULY 4, 1858.

7551.270

BY J. I. T. COOLIDGE.

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DISCOURSE.

2 Tim. iv. 5: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

The labors of the noble apostle were nearly ended. Paul, the aged, his course rapidly drawing to its close, patiently waiting the time of his departure, writes to youthful Timothy many exhortations to fidelity, that he may do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry.

I have recently read again all the words of Paul concerning his office as an ambassador of Christ. He magnified it. No one can feel the force of his words without a thrill of joy, if indeed he has been called to the same ministry, and a trembling at his very heart lest he fail of fidelity to the great commission. Truly he desires a good thing who seeks ordination as a servant of men for Christ's sake. There is no nobler work. To stand before men, not in one's own name; to speak, not in the excellency of one's own wisdom; to warn, to urge, to invite, not with the persuasion of one's own tenderness; but to do all in the name and love of the blessed Lord, and in the wisdom which the Holy Ghost teacheth, — this surely is a position, an office, a work, with which none other can bear comparison. And should it be that the Lord seals

a ministry as his own by the living souls brought by it into living relations of love and hope to himself, from the bondage of the world to the liberty of the sons of God, from the darkness of the natural heart to the ever-beaming glory which breaks upon the renewed heart, who can measure the satisfaction of him whose service is thus approved? And yet so conscious must he be that the excellency of the power is not in himself, but in God, that his song of thanksgiving has but one burden: "Not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name, be all the praise!"

I would magnify my office. After sixteen years' experience, I would bear record, that, sacred as from my childhood it has always been to me, it has grown holier with every passing year, even unto this moment, when I am resigning its exercise in this long-cherished spot. Never has it appeared to me so grand, never did I feel deeper gratitude to the great Head of the church, that he called me from every other occupation of men to the ministry of his gospel, than now, when it would seem its long labors ended in disappointment and failure. The distinction is a very broad one between the office, and the place of its exercise. The office stands in the call and ordination of Jesus Christ, not in the will and appointment of man. The ministry of the reconciliation is the Lord's establishment, not the choice of men. The pulpit is not framed by men's hands. It is wherever the ambassador of Christ stands to proclaim the gospel of pardon and peace. It may be the deck of a fishing-boat thrust out a little way from the land, or it may be in the courts of the temple; it may be on the mountain's side, or in the synagogue's desk; it may be in the noisy judgment-hall, or the quiet upper chamber; on Mars Hill, or Cæsar's palace. Men may build costly temples to cover it, and come and sit gladly beneath its shelter; they may reverence it, and lavish of their

abundance to adorn it. And it is well they should. But they did not and do not establish it. Let them tear down the houses they have builded for it; let them burn and destroy the work of their own hands, and thrust the preacher from it; let there be no more massy towers and lofty spires within the cities and villages of the land; still, while the gospel is remembered in any heart, there will be pulpits enough by the wayside, and corners of streets, whence its solemn threatenings and gracious invitations shall be preached in the ears of men. Though the voice be as of one crying in the wilderness, still it will cry, and men shall come and be baptized, confessing their sins, and imploring their pardon of the Almighty God, through the precious blood of his Son Jesus Christ. The last pulpit will fall, the voice of the last preacher will be hushed, only when the angels who sang the birth-song of the Redeemer shall chant the requiem over his despised and forgotten redemption. Let the distinction be made always between the office, and the place where it is exercised, and how can one but magnify his calling, and glory in it, leave what he may, or stand where he will, careful only to do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry? The Lord give me grace that I change not in this testimony!

But I must pass from this theme to meet the demands of the especial occasion of this day. The time has come, not unlooked for of late, but which we could not realize, and which but the fewest of us have sought or desired, when my ministry among you must cease. I must now resign to you whatever you have committed to my hands. I know not how I can better meet the expectations and proprieties of the hour than by a calm and full review of my ministry at this post. You will pardon the appearance of egotism. The occasion is so personal in all its aspects, that I must need talk of

myself. I hope to speak the exact truth. I shall certainly set down nought in malice. I wish to deal fairly with all. In any criticism I may be led to make, I desire to be understood as speaking only of matters as I comprehend them. I shall try to wound no one's feelings, and be unjust to no one's faith. I cannot expect to satisfy every one. And my criticism I must allow to be criticized; nor shall I complain, if only the friendly feeling be reciprocated.

I shall divide what I have to say into these parts, — my personal experience; the spirit of this ministry, and its results.

I. My personal experience. I should much prefer to pass over this entirely. But the peculiarities of my position demand that it should, in part at least, be related. It is known among you, and it has been widely spread abroad, that my faith has undergone great and essential changes since I commenced my labors among you, and that it is on this account alone that our relation is now dissolved. It is proper that I should speak to that point. It will be seen in the narrative, what I desire to have distinctly understood, that these changes have been neither sudden nor recent. They are the result of a long and constant process of thought and experience. To myself they appear not so much changes, as increasing light from the first faint ray of earliest dawn, — light which I have ever prayed for, and been ready to follow, guide whither it would.

I was educated a Unitarian of the straitest sect. As such I passed my earliest youth, and as such made choice of my profession in life, and became a student in the theological school at Cambridge. It was during the preparatory studies of the ministry in that place that the original movement which has led to this issue commenced. And this was the occasion:

A theme was assigned to me, entitled "What is the meaning and efficacy of the death of Christ?" With easy rapidity, I wrote down the views I had received from my early training. But instantly the question arose in my mind, awakened by no previous doubt or former disputation, and independent of all human suggestion, — wholly, as I believe, by the action of the Holy Spirit, — "Do you explain the language of the apostles concerning that wonderful death?" I answered the rising doubt quickly and easily by saying they magnified the event; they stood too near to see it in its true proportions; they naturally and honestly misconceived its meaning; they confused it through their Jewish training. But when the question struck deeper; when it asked, "Do you explain the language Christ himself uses concerning his death and its efficacy? do you fill up his words with a meaning at all commensurate with their apparent force? and, if he intended no more than you say, why did he clothe such simple truths in such perplexing forms?" — then I saw the brink on which I stood; then I saw that the question really involved the whole subject of faith. I saw that it struck at the very root of Christianity as a system of authoritative truth. I saw that it carried with it the very Bible itself. I could yield up easily the authority of Paul and Peter and James and John; but I could not resign without sharp anguish my repose in Christ as an infallible Teacher. I could not allow the fatal thought, that he might have been deceived himself, or that he might have overstrained the purpose of his own death. I had learned to rest on his infallibility through divine inspiration, and my reverence for his character was most profound. The bare suspicion of the least exaggeration or mistake, or of his meaning aught but precisely what his words appeared to convey, was acute distress. Yet the withering thought did come, and remained, and my soul grew dark; and, without exaggeration,

I can say, "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon my house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." My faith lay in ruins. I was full of doubt, and yet not in despair. I could not lose my reverence for Jesus Christ, — a reverence which had grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, and which held me to him in the midst of my darkness. Long days, and even months, so passed. At last I was led by the Spirit, as I thankfully believe, to see this much with perfect clearness, — that Jesus Christ, whatever his nature might be, man, archangel, First-born of the creation, or Son equal with and one with the Father, was far above me; that my place was not at his side, certainly not above him to criticize him, but at his feet meekly to hear and believe. Many sayings of his I did not comprehend; but the darkness was in me, and not in him. He was Light, and in his light should I see light. I humbly and rejoicingly acknowledged him as my Master and Lord. And in due time I went forth to preach in his name, and according to his word. I felt justified in so doing. There appeared nothing in the body to which I belonged to forbid it, but every thing in its spirit and profession to allow it. If in this I judged wrongly, my plea must be a sincere and honest purpose.

So it was that you found me a preacher, and called me to your pulpit, and to the office of pastor among you. In this spirit I accepted the trust, and commenced my labors. I came to preach in the name of Christ, to preach whatever I should learn from him, and to preach on his authority alone. I was a Unitarian by education, by social relations, and so far as my faith concerning Christ had taken form. But, even then, it was not Unitarianism which was dear to me. I held it lightly, ready to part with it, if so Christ should require, though never dreaming that he would. It was therefore no

chance selection of a text, when, on the Sunday following my ordination, I preached from these words: "So thou, O son of man! I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." My most frequent themes of discourse and exhortation were repentance, regeneration, newness of life, renewal of spirit; these more than the moralities and respectabilities of life, because I saw that the fountain must be pure before the stream could run clear; that the tree sound at the core alone brought its fruit to perfection; and because it seemed the way of the Lord.

Still there were many words of Jesus that were hard and dark, opening depths of meaning I could sound with no plummet of my own making. The Gospel of St. John especially was a sealed book. I loved to read it, for the same reason, as I suppose, that the apostles loved to listen while the Master spake, even though they turned one to another, saying, "We cannot tell what he saith." At last, you must allow me to say, the first really revealing light broke upon me, when I was enabled to discern the meaning in these two texts, which had before appeared to stand in direct opposition: "No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him;" "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." The office of the Holy Ghost, in its awakening power arousing the soul to a consciousness of its deepest wants, and guiding it to the Son, the only satisfaction; and that of the Son, by his own incarnation, manifesting the Father, — were distinctly opened upon my mind. My frequent theme became "Christ, the image of God;" "Whosoever hath seen me hath seen the Father." Christ, the manifestation of the Father, — this I never wearied of unfolding to you in every possible and attractive form in which it appeared to my own soul; and many among you welcomed

it as a bright and blessed truth, shedding new light upon the relations of the Father and the Son, and of the soul of man to each.

My mind continued to pursue the opening way. I was called to minister to very deep experiences. I was invited to holiest confidences. Secrets of the inmost soul were revealed to me. Troubled hearts sought to be soothed; conscience-beaten souls to be relieved; the mourner to be consoled; the dying to be ministered unto, as those close to the threshold of eternity. As a pastor, I was made familiar with the deep workings of the soul; and, from my conferences, I went back to the study of the Bible. More and more, I found the experience of the human heart answered back to the Bible, as deep calleth unto deep. I saw that all men needed *a gospel*, — needed more than a righteous and holy and perfect law; that the law could not deliver, but only increase the consciousness of condemnation. I saw it was not Paul alone who called, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" but the inmost soul of every man; and that it was only when every man could exclaim with Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ," that he found the peace and joy of believing, according to the Scripture, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And therefore it was, when we assembled to dedicate this temple to the most high God, and to his Son the Saviour of the world, I endeavored in my discourse to set forth, with what clearness of faith I had, Jesus Christ man's needed Saviour.

But not yet was my faith complete. Steadily it advanced, until, by the constant study of the Bible in our various readings and lectures, the marvellous unity of that book stood signally forth, — a unity in the midst of its manifold diversity. It is, then, *one* book from Genesis to the Revelation, from the

creation to the consummation of all things; the history of the mighty movement on the part of our God for the redemption of a fallen race; of the knitting anew the broken relations between the Lord God and his alienated children on the earth; of that mystery of God's will which was working from the first to the end, that, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ. It is therefore God's own word to the human family, clear, authoritative, final. Then it was that the meaning of these and similar words began to be revealed: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself;" "There is no other name given under heaven whereby man can be saved;" "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." I saw this to be the burden of Scripture, its key-note, melting into one glorious, subduing harmony its thousand various voices. I saw with increasing light and joy how sacrifice, psalm, prophecy, agreed with history, biography, epistle; how the Old Testament pointed as a finger continually on to the New, and the New fulfilled the Old; how that in Adam we die, and in Christ are made alive; that the spiritual Rock the fathers drank of in the wilderness was Christ; that the Word of the old dispensation, who in the beginning was with God and was God, was in the new dispensation made flesh, and dwelt among us; that He appeared in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that God might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. All was clear; my faith was established. The Lord had led me about, but at last had placed my feet upon the rock. My faith stands on the Bible, the whole Bible; in Him to whom the Scriptures give witness; in his life, as my inspiration; in his death, as my reconciliation; in his resurrection, as my hope of eternal glory; in his ascension and coronation,

as my all-powerful Advocate with the Father, and as Head over all things to his church. To Him I trust the everlasting interests of my undying soul; blessing God that I can say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. The life I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Such, my friends, as accurately as can be briefly stated, is the history of those changes in my Christian faith which have removed me so far from the form of doctrine in which I was early instructed. You now easily perceive why, as I have said, they appear to me not so much *changes*, as increasing light from the first faint break of day.

"Are you not, then, a Unitarian?" does any one inquire? I answer, I am not. "Wherein do you differ?" I answer, In my entire conception of the whole system of salvation, as I read it in the Scriptures and the necessities of the human heart. It is difficult, I know, to criticize the views of a body, which, in its original dogmatical position, seems fast passing away. It is too evident to be denied or longer concealed, that, in the denomination called Unitarian, there are at present two very opposite and determined movements, both of which will compel the absolute abandonment of the form of faith which in the religious world is known by that name. The one is leading with great force and attractiveness to the extreme of Rationalism; the other, to greater nearness to and closer sympathy with the broad evangelical body of the Christian church. Yet there is that which is understood as Unitarianism in the community; and from that I differ with strong dissent. I dissent from it because it does not recognize and express the unity of the Bible, by which alone "the spiritual identity of the religion of the Bible, from

Genesis to the Revelation," can be discerned and accepted; because, therefore, it does not recognize the universal alienation of the human race from God, through the disorder and disarrangement which our nature, regarded as a whole, has derived from sin; and because, therefore, it does not recognize the great central fact of Christianity, — the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, whom, when the fulness of time had come, God sent forth, made of a woman, made under the law, that through union with this Son of God, and by his life and death reconciling God and man, we might receive the adoption of sons, and regain the image of the Creator, which in Adam we had lost. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." And again I dissent from Unitarianism, thus understood, because I am compelled, with deep regret for its seeming harshness, to declare, after long and careful observation, that, left to itself, to its own tendencies unrestrained, to its own natural proclivities, it leads to irreverence and unbelief.* In fine, the distinction between the system of Unitarianism on the one hand, and the system of the Evangelical church on the other,

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* I am painfully aware this will seem a hard saying. It will appear, to many faithful hearts among the Unitarians, most false and ungenerous. But it should be remembered, I speak, not of individuals, but of a system. I speak of the tendencies of that system as they are made manifest in the generation educated under its influence. I cannot disguise from myself, and I should be untrue to my convictions of duty, if, in the position in which I am placed, I refused to affirm, that the spirit of the system, as such, did not lead to the disbelief of the Scriptures, as a final authority in matters of faith; to lax ideas of the sovereignty of God, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin as against that sovereignty; and of the offered salvation by Christ, holding that salvation rather as by the faith *of* Christ, the faith he brought and taught, than by faith *in* Christ as himself the Reconciler and Saviour. If I judge wrongly, it is not intentionally, or with unkindness and hardness of heart. I am united with too many Unitarians in the bonds of Christian love to wish, in parting with the body, to cast an ill-natured censure. In that body, I would bear testimony, if it were of any account or need, that there are very many of as pure and devout a spirit as can be counted in any household of faith.

seems to be accurately stated in these words, which, in quoting, I have taken the liberty to slightly alter: "The one makes the individual the starting-point for all improvement; whereas the starting-point of the other is Christ. The first is for dealing with nature as it finds it. It takes man such as he is, with the powers and faculties which he possesses, and supposes that their cultivation may enable him to shake off the evils and infirmities which all deplore. The man himself, therefore, is the commencement of all renewal. He may use God's grace, indeed; he may invoke the name of Christ: but in himself is the ultimate principle of renovation. The second, on the other hand, makes Christ alone the starting-point of all improvement. It attributes the first renewal of man's race to the entrance into its ranks of a higher Being, whose quickening influence is the principle of regeneration to all believers. In Him, and not in them, is the original principle of movement; and it is only by union with Him — the Word incarnate — that the restoration of man is possible." "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;" and he "quickeneth whom he will."

This is a very broad distinction; and, not for a moment doubting which is the Scripture doctrine, I am compelled to leave the former, and, with my whole heart throbbing with gratitude that I can, cleave to the latter.

II. Having lingered so long on this division of my discourse, I hasten to say fewer words on what yet remains. And I pass to the spirit of the ministry, which is now closing.

May I not say, it has been an earnest spirit? How can the preacher help being in earnest? How can he, if his whole soul is filled with the deep solemnity of his position?

He should not preach at all, who does not feel, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel!" who cannot say, "I believe, and therefore do I speak." What a commission has he received! What a cause has he to plead! What great, stirring, urgent themes has he to unfold! He, a living and yet a dying man, stands before living and yet dying men to bind together the life that now is and the life that is to come, with the strong bonds of solemn responsibility and just retribution; to open the mysteries of the human heart, and bring down the mysteries of the infinite grace of God; to arouse and inspire, to warn and encourage, to wound and to heal, to bind and to unloose according to the counsel of the Most High; to startle the dream of the sinner, to gently lead the penitent, to console the mourner, and open the visions of the new city of God to the dying. He is to maintain the sacred cause of Christ, to advance his kingdom, and win souls to his fold. Must he not be in earnest? It is earnestness alone that can keep him in the hearing of men. Only as he is earnest will he make his voice be heard amid the noise of business and the choruses of pleasure. The pulpit must be in earnest, or there is no excuse for it; and, in these earnest days, it will be passed by and forgotten. I ask again, brethren, may I not say that this ministry has been in earnest? Whatever of manner you may have had to bear with and pardon, whatever apparent severity you may have had to regret at times, whatever infirmities and infelicities may have given you pain and temporary offence, will you not allow me the right to say, that my work has been an earnest one; that I have spoken and labored, not as one who was a time-server or a days-man, but as one who believed his office was no sinecure, but a charge, solemn, momentous, and exercised under an awful responsibility? God forgive me if I have not left this impression on your souls!

And may I not also say, the spirit of this ministry has been full of ready sympathy and respectful courtesy? He mistakes his calling grievously who in his earnestness loses tenderness and respect for those who listen to his words. Pride, coldness, distant reserve, assumption, are no proper traits in the character of the ambassador of Him who, by his infinite condescension and out of his abounding love, was the friend of every man; as ready and willing a guest at the poor man's board as at the rich man's banquet, at Mary's cottage as at the Pharisee's mansion, at the marriage in Cana as at the Centurion's house of mourning. His servant should strive for the same spirit; and when he speaks from the holy desk, though he rebuke and warn and threaten, it should be with no disrespect or scorn, with no hardness and cold severity, but firmly, yet tenderly; uncompromisingly, yet in love; boldly and indignantly if need be, as need there sometimes is, yet with a heart that loves while it rebukes, and rebukes because it loves.

No one knows better than I, how far, very far, below the blessed example, I have fallen. No one knows better than I, that at times I have not spoken as one whose voice was attuned to the soul-subduing accents of the gracious Lord, gracious even when he was compelled to say, "Woe unto you!" But I can truly affirm, I have sought to bring myself into sympathy with you all; to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. I have sought to enter your homes as a personal friend. I have welcomed you to my own with a frank cordiality. I have invited your confidence, and have kept it, when reposed in me, as a sacred treasure. I have stood in this desk, knowing you alone as my people, and striving, according to my ability, to open to you the riches of the blessed gospel. I have been with you in sickness, that I might bring you the healing of the Spirit. I have

been with you in sorrow and bereavement, that I might comfort you with the love of God, the sympathy of Christ, and the peace of the Holy Ghost. In all things I have striven to be to you a true pastor, according to the measure of grace the Lord hath given to me. God forbid that this should have the appearance of boasting! I say it honestly, meekly acknowledging the grace of God, by which alone it is true, if indeed it be true.

Yet once more, may I not say that the spirit of this ministry has been an honest and free spirit? Great as the change of religious views and constant as the progress have been, and broad as the differences are between some of us, there have been no concealment, no attempt at disguise, no partial statements, no vain compromises. I have spoken plainly and unequivocally what I have thought, and after the method in which my mind could most fairly express its thought. To you, first of all, I have opened my deep and growing convictions. You have been enabled, if you would, to follow me step by step in the way in which I have been led. I have never said nor wished to say elsewhere more or differently than I have spoken here. It has been a free pulpit. You have always rebuked every attempt to restrict its liberty. I have never been straitened in my freedom to speak on any theme, and after the dictate of my own conscience, whether on usual or unusual topics of discourse. I have never been forced to vindicate among you the liberty of the pulpit. I have always found it granted. If any have ever thought to restrain it in the least degree, they soon discovered they understood not the spirit you were of, and have taken themselves to a more congenial atmosphere, or been silent. This freedom I have endeavored never to abuse, but, in its spirit, to speak the honest thought of a free mind. It was a noble stand you took two years ago, when, upon a candid acknow-

ledgment of difference of doctrinal views among us, you yet requested me to retract my resignation, and remain your pastor.* I was proud of you then. I felt it was a glorious example. I hoped a different consummation from this we to-day witness. I trusted that the word of truth we should so candidly study together would bring to us at least the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And my trust was, I know, the desire and effort also of the largest number among you. But there were those who could not suffer it so to be. And I do not complain of the disappointment, because to the very last the spirit of the ministrations has been kept unsullied by any suspicion of dishonesty and insincerity. I have spoken the word as it was given me to speak. Perhaps a longer continuance would not have been free of uneasy restraints.

III. And now of the results of the ministry. I should have much to say on this point, did time permit me to follow

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* It may be proper to state, for the information of those unacquainted with the facts, that reference is made to the action of the proprietors of the church upon a letter addressed to them by the pastor, provisionally resigning his office, in 1856. The following communication in answer will fully explain the text : —

" Boston, May 21, 1856.

" Whereas the proprietors of the Thirteenth Congregational Church have received a communication from their pastor, the Rev. J. I. T. Coolidge, provisionally resigning his office, and alleging ' great and decided changes ' in doctrinal views; therefore —

" *Resolved*, That the proprietors aforesaid, in view of the above-named circumstances, take this occasion to express in the strongest terms their personal attachment to their pastor, — an attachment strengthened by the association of fourteen years; and by his truly faithful and devoted pastoral services, fully acceptable, as we believe, to every member of this society.

" *Resolved*, That while we do not fully sympathize with the views of Christian doctrine frequently expressed by our pastor, and especially at the late interview in the vestry, yet nevertheless, feeling strongly averse to any disturbance of our mutual relations as pastor and people, we respectfully request him to withdraw the letter aforesaid; thus leaving the whole matter as though that communication had not been made.

" A true copy. Attest: Wm. M. Simpson,
Clerk of the Proprietors."

my inclination. But I must, in the fewest words, close this division of my subject. I say, then, my aim, my sole aim, growing more and more distinct with every passing year, becoming more and more my simple purpose, has been to lead the souls of this fold of Christ to the Great Shepherd; this, first and last, strongest and foremost of all my desires and prayers. Not to preach to you elegant essays, not to please fastidious tastes, not to charm the ear with flowing eloquence even if I had the power, not to invite you to vain discussions, not to attack other men's opinions, not to contend with opposing views, not to dogmatize or criticize, have I stood before you from sabbath to sabbath; but simply, in what best way I could, to lead you to Jesus Christ, the all-sufficient Guide and only Lord; to him in faith and love, that you might be under his direction, who is the way and the truth and the life; and to look solely to him as the one only appointed way to the Father. This, I repeat it, has been my one purpose. I asked you to repose your confidence in no man, and in no human creed, but solely in Him who saith to all, "Come unto me;" and "whoso cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." I have set him before you constantly and unweariedly, — Christ, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption," — and have called upon you to receive him as your Prophet, Priest, and King. By all the appeals of God's love through him, by all the moving entreaties of his condescension and poverty and suffering and death, by all the persuasions of his yearning tenderness and pity, I have sought to win your souls to him.

With devout gratitude I speak it, many and many a soul among you has responded to the call, and found the peace it elsewhere sought in vain. Many and many a one among you has felt his heart burn within him as Jesus has

talked with him, and he with Jesus. Many and many a one has come to this altar, and joyfully made his confession of the Lord who bought him, and consecrated his whole life to the service of his Redeemer. Many have found a Friend who will never desert or forsake them, — a Pastor who will lead them by the still waters and in green pastures; many now present with us to-day, and many gone before us, who have felt no fear, but sweet peace, in dying, because they trusted in Him who had given them eternal life; many, a large company, who shall meet, after the short separations of this mortal life, around his throne, to join together in the ever-swelling anthem of the redeemed, "Worthy the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." These are the seals of my ministry, and the crown of my rejoicing. Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. Your faith let no man take from you. May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work! Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ.

This is all I need say of the results of this ministry. The great day of account shall unfold the whole; and may the Lord have mercy on me, if I have failed to watch for your souls!

Thus, my friends, I have as briefly as I might, leaving much unsaid that my heart prompts, reviewed my ministry in this place. I have been forced to speak of myself too much. It was not a topic I elected. It was pressed upon me. I have spoken as my conscience bears witness.

And now it remains only to speak that word we all shrink to hear. Sixteen years of my life have been spent among you. They have been as happy as often falls to the lot of mortals. God has been gracious to me. The Lord has revealed himself to me; and what could I ask more? Your kindness has been uninterrupted. Your forbearance has been tested by my youth and inexperience, and has never failed. Your trial has been great in being compelled to listen to one whose own views in religion have been constantly unfolding in a direction you did not desire; and all but the fewest of you have sustained it, and were willing to sustain it still. I could love to pursue my ministry among you to the end. I could wish I might have finished my course with you without a denominational name, preaching to you of the blessed Jesus as the Scriptures and his ever-present spirit should give me power, — preaching to you with the Bible in your hands, from the Bible alone. But it was not so to be. There are those among you who could not suffer it.

Farewell, then, my friends! God be with you, and bless you, and lift up the light of his countenance more and more upon you, and give you peace! Your welfare will be dear to me; and, when life's short warfare is ended, may you be found in the everlasting peace of heaven!

To the children of this congregation let me say, I have loved you tenderly, as a pastor should the lambs of his flock. I have watched for you with constant vigilance. I have prayed for you that the good Lord might keep you from the evil that is in the world. Remember me, then, as one who will ever remember you. Remember me as one who left as his last word to you, Love the dear Lord, who is the children's Friend and Saviour, ready always to lay his hand of blessing upon them, and fold them to his bosom in perfect love.

To all who have labored with me in any portion of the work here carried forward — and most truly and nobly have you given me of your life and co-operation — let me gratefully express my sincerest thanks. May the Lord reward you bountifully, who have sowed so bountifully!

And to this our beautiful and beloved Zion will I say, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces! For my brethren and companions' sake will I now say, Peace be within thee!"

Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always, by all means! The Lord be with you all! Farewell!